Why not say "Adventist" instead of Millerite

LETTER OF CONVEYANCE

CONCERNING REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON

HISTORICAL BASIS, INVOLVEMENTS, AND VALIDITY OF THE OCTOBER 22, 1844, POSITION

To the Officers and General Conference Committee:

In submitting to our appointing body the accompanying report of the Special Research Committee on the October 22, 1844, date, and related dates, we would respectfully present a sketch of the field that has had to be covered, the methods employed, and the results accruing--together with their supporting reasons and substantiating facts. Before doing so, however, a word as to the committee itself may be in order--its personnel, organization, and assignment of research responsibility.

1. The Committee. The personnel of the committee, as appointed, was as follows: "L.E. Froom, chairman; L.H. Wood, W.H. Teesdale, M.E. Kern, A.W. Werline, M.L. Andreasen, F.C. Gilbert." Upon organization, L.H. Wood was chosen secretary. And upon request by our committee, authorization was received for Miss Grace Amadon to join us as a collaborator--thus making eight in all. Definite division of responsibility in research assignment was then made. And frequent meetings of the committee for the hearing, study, and criticism of the reports of the three special investigators--L.H. Wood, Grace Amadon, and L.E. Froom--have kept the committee in constant touch with each step of our study during the five months of intensive research required.

2. The Problem. The problem before us--that of determining why and how the Adventists of 1844 ultimately fixed with certainty upon the precise day October 22 as the exact terminus of the 2300 years, and of evaluating the soundness of their reasoning and evidence--was not as simple as might at first be presumed. It necessitated, first of all, the reassembling of the entire historical picture, through compassing the entire Millerite literature. This revealed the progressive steps taken by the Millerite leaders over a series of years--steps which led ultimately to the well-known conclusions reached in the autumnal months of 1844.

Our quest involved the reading of the many authorities cited or alluded to by the Miller scholars, and which were really the determining factors in their conclusions. (Incidentally, there was deeper and wider scholarship among the Millerite editors and writers than most of us have been aware--a scholarship of which we may well be proud.) This has, in turn, necessitated securing source materials from widely separated lands and in various languages. We have been successful, we are happy to report, in finding practically all the sources.

Our problem made necessary the establishment, independently, of the validity of the key positions taken in 1844. For example, the Karaite reckoning in reference to the Hebrew calendar constituted the basis for the true beginning of the Jewish sacred year. These same principles governed determination both of the true date of the Passover at the close of Christ's public ministry in the midst of the 70th week, and the date of the beginning of the true 7th month in 1844, with its precise 10th day.

The complex factors involved had all to be worked through to conclusion in order to determine whether the evidence accepted by the Millerites was sound and invulnerable Biblically, historically, chronologically, and astronomically. In this case, it depended (a) upon the correct determining of the true beginning of the sacred year; (b) upon locating the true 7th month of that year; and (c) upon the correct determination of the true 10th day of that 7th month. As the Millerites came to their conclusions concerning these three points upon the basis of the Karaite reckoning, it became necessary for the Karaite historical positions to be thoroughly understood, in order to determine their validity--in other words, not merely to know exactly what was believed, but why the positions taken were right intrinsically. The importance of this is apparent, but the difficulties encountered in the process were very real.

In addition to evidence as to the precise day, October 22, there had first to be incontrovertible proof as to the year, and to the correlated dates in the 2300-year span, which incorporates the 70 weeks. In order to be certain as to the end-year, it was necessary to establish the beginning-year. In fact, three great inseparable dates form the far-flung terminal abutments and the central keystone of this matchless prophetic arch--the B.C. 457 autumnal beginning, the October 22, 1844, autumnal ending for the 2300-year span, and the 31 A.D. spring crucifixion that ties the span together. These were declared by the Millerite students to be inseparable links in the chain of prophetico-historico-astronomical evidence. And such, indeed, they are.

Therefore, (1) the scientific accuracy of the 457 date has been traced on the basis of a series of synchronizing regnal dates, duly attested, both historically and archaeologically, and which have been properly anchored by well-authenticated eclipses; (2) the astronomical and calendrical accuracy of the 31 A.D. spring crucifixion--a position that was assumed at the time of the 7th Month Movement--and the technically astronomical aspects of the Millerite calculations for 1844, has been carefully worked out; and (3) the documented, historical portrayal of the early Millerite positions, on through to their ultimate and perfected form, with the precise reasons therefor, and their far-reaching involvements--together with the aftermath of the October 22 crisis, the two positions and church bodies eventuating, and the reasons for our adherence as Seventh-day Adventists to the 7th Month Movement positions--comprise the remainder of the Report.

3. The Results. Your Committee feels that a threefold cord of evidence has been woven by these historical and scientific studies that is far stronger and may prove of more vital import to this movement in stressful days to come than anyone perhaps realizes at the moment. The Committee believes that the hour had manifestly come for a thorough, scientific study of these dates and positions that would go to the very bottom of the historical and technical evidence, and which would provide a fully documented, soul-satisfying exposition of the subject that will meet every legitimate demand. The importance of our task as a movement, and the vastness of our commission, requires just such a presentation. Never before has this been worked out in the form now presented, and in the investigation new and invaluable fields of evidence have been brought to light.

The results, set forth in affirmative form in the several parts of this Report, are not simply the work of the individual investigator, but each presentation has been seriously studied and carefully checked by the Committee. While the Report may seem lengthy, it really could not be adequately compassed in much less space. Portions of the Report may seem rather technical, but the

very nature of our task demanded not only an extensive investigation of historical source materials, but a most careful study of various systems of chronology and of the astronomical reckoning of time; all of which calls for exactness of statement, as well as thorough documentation.

A series of comprehensive charts, graphs, and diagrams visualize and simplify all three presentations in confirmation of the conclusions offered, while the photostats and other documentary evidence, of necessity assembled, form a permanent General Conference asset. Since the Report was designed for ultimate distribution, it was deemed best by your Committee to submit it in form suitable for publication,--if and when accepted.

The Committee feels especially grateful for the unstinted assistance given by Mr. Glenn Draper, associate astronomer at the United States Naval Observatory, in checking all astronomical details, and to Miss Erna Borm for much valued help in translation. Nor would we fail to mention the earnest, pioneering work of J.H. Wierts, in the astronomical field, and his urge for a thorough, substantiating investigation. And finally, let it be said, that in our researches, we have been deeply conscious of divine providences which we here gratefully acknowledge.

Respectfully submitted in behalf of the Committee,

L. E. Froom

Chairman.

Washington, D.C.
May 23, 1939.